

Serial No. 10/077,359

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed 5 April 2004 has been received and considered.

CLAIM REJECTION UNDER 35 USC 102:

Claims 1, 5-8, 17-20 and 22 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) over Lopez. On page 5 of his Action the Examiner indicated that claims 2 -3 and 14-16 would be allowable provided that they were rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their respective base claim and any intervening claims.

Responsive to the indications of the Examiner, applicant has amended Claim 1 to include all of the limitations of Claim 2. In essence, Claim 1, as amended, includes all of the subject matter of Claim 1 and the subject matter of the former Claim 2. It follows that Claim 1 as amended is essentially Claim 2 rewritten in independent form. In view of this amendment, applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1 should now be allowable.

Claims 5-8, 17-20 and 22 all depend from Claim 1. With the amendment of Claim 1 and its placement into allowable form, the claims dependent on Claim 1 should now be allowable, not only in view of the allowability of Claim 1, but furthermore in view of the further limitations set forth in those claims. It follows that Claims 5-8, 17-20 and 22 should now be allowable.

Claim 3 has now been amended into independent form incorporating therein all of the limitations of the former Claim 1. It follows that Claim 3, as amended, is the former Claim 3 rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of its base claim. IN view of the indications of the Examiner, Claim 3 should now be allowable.

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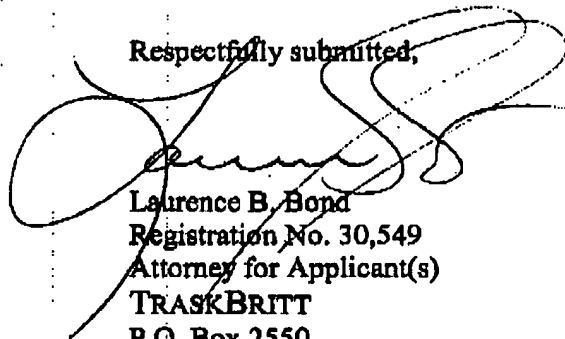
REJECTION OF UNDER 35 USC 103:

Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 USC 103 over Lopez. Claim 17 is dependent on Claim 1. In view of the amendments to Claim 1 and its placement into condition of allowance, Claim 17 should now be allowable in view of its dependence on Claim 1 and further in view of the further structural elements set forth in Claim 17.

CONCLUSION:

In view of the amendments indicated above and further in view of the arguments set forth, applicants respectfully request reconsideration of their application.

Respectfully submitted,



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